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S E C R E T THE HAGUE 002427

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [SY](#) [NL](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/SYRIA: NO PLANS TO MEET AT UNGA

REF: STATE 159137

Classified By: POLCOUNS Andrew Schofer for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

**¶1.** (S) On September 7, POLCOUNS delivered reftel points separately to Tessa Terpstra (Acting Syria/Lebanon Desk Officer, Dutch MFA) and Karel van Kesteren (Director of the MFA's Department of UN and International Financial Organizations Affairs.) POLCOUNS also asked directly whether the Dutch anticipated any high-level contacts between the Dutch and Syrian delegations on the margins of UNGA. Terpstra and van Kesteren stressed that no such meetings were planned or expected. They added that they would keep the U.S. points in mind should they receive a request from the Syrian side (which they did not anticipate.)

**¶2.** (S) According to Terpstra, neither Dutch Prime Minister Balkenende nor Foreign Minister Bot has expressed interest in meeting their Syrian counterparts at this time. (They do plan to meet, however, with counterparts from Oman, Qatar, and the UAE -- which Balkenende plans to visit later this fall -- as well as from Israel and the Palestinian Authority.) Terpstra noted that the Dutch share the concerns raised in the demarche, and also see no reason to meet with the Syrians at a time when the EU's association agreement has "stalled" due to Syria's lack of cooperation. Van Kesteren similarly stressed that the Dutch leaders had limited time and other, higher priorities for UNGA.

BLAKEMAN